



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
Planning and Land Use Department

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February 28, 2006

Randy Bates, Director
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Office of Project Management & Permitting
400 Willoughby Avenue
Juneau, AK 99801-1796

RF: Request for review and approval of revised
Matanuska-Susitna Borough Coastal Management Plan

Dear Mr. Bates:

The purpose of this cover letter is to present for review and approval the Revised Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Coastal Management Program Final Draft Plan Amendment. The Pt. MacKenzie Area Meriting Special Attention Final Draft Plan Amendment is also included as part of this document.

Each of the four CD-ROMs contains electronic copies of:

- Final Draft Plan Amendment, Volumes 1 and II
Copy of resolution of support from the MSB Planning Commission and Borough Assembly
Public distribution mailing list
- Names of parties that provided comments
- Copies of comments received
- Copies of the minutes or summary of any public meetings held
- Written documentation of consultation with state and federal agencies

The Final Draft Plan Amendment is a complete draft of the amended MSB Coastal Management Program (including AMSA). The Final Draft Plan Amendment includes the following required elements (each one is followed by the volume and chapter name):

- Enforceable Policies Cross-Reference Table (Vol. I, Appendix B; Vol. II, Appendix B)
- Issues, goals, and objectives (Vol. I, Chapter Four; Vol. II, Chapter Three)
- Organization (Vol. I, Chapter Two; Vol. II, Chapter One)
Coastal zone boundaries (Vol. I, Chapter Three; Vol. II, Chapter Two)
- Resource inventory (Vol. I, Chapter Five; Vol. II, Chapter Four)
- Resource analysis (Vol. I, Chapter Five; Vol. II, Chapter Four)

Subject uses and activities (Vol. I, Chapter Seven; Vol. II, Chapter Six)
Designations (Vol. I, Chapters Three, Five, Six, and Seven; Vol. II, Chapter, Two, Four, Five, & Six)

Proper and improper uses and activities (Vol. I, Chapter Seven; Vol. II, Chapter Six)
District enforceable policies (Vol. I, Chapter Six; Vol. II, Chapter Five)

- Implementation (Vol. I, Chapter Seven; Vol. II, Chapter Six)
- Area which merits special attention (Vol. II)
- Public participation (Vol. I, Appendix F; Volume II, Appendix F)
- Appendices A – F (Vols. I and II)

Although there is no requirement for policy justifications in state law, a summary of the intent of the plan, the designations, and the enforceable policies is provided below as a courtesy to DNR.

Recent changes in Alaska State law require that the MSB revise its coastal management plan (CMP). The attached document has been prepared to comply with the Alaska Coastal Management Act, as amended by the Alaska State Legislature in 2003, and the regulations adopted in 2004. New state regulations require the MSB to assign a designation to the lands and waters within its coastal zone boundary to ensure that the MSB continues to have local input on proposed development occurring adjacent to or on the rivers, streams, and lakes within its coastal zone. The MSB has designated the lands and waters within its coastal zone boundary as a Recreation and Tourism Use Area and the lands and waters within the Pt. MacKenzie Area Meriting Special Attention (AMSA) as a Designated Major Energy Facility Use Area.

The MSB coastal zone comprises 4,000 square miles of valuable watersheds, wetlands, uplands, rivers, lakes, streams, and lakes. All of them are important resources that influence the quality of the MSB's coastal marine environment. Local usage and experience, along with the physical, biological, and cultural attributes upon which recreation use depends, are well-documented in local, state, and federal planning studies and documents. These plans, studies and documents are referenced in our plan submittal.

The plan addresses a number of important issues including coastal development and coastal access. The Statewide Standard for coastal development directs coastal districts to prioritize uses and activities in the coastal area based on whether the uses are water-dependent, water-related, or neither water-dependent nor water-related but without an inland alternative. These terms are broad in scope. The MSB CMP identifies enforceable policies that define which uses or activities in the district fall into each of the three categories, thus making the broad standard more specific. The continued health and expansion of the tourism industry depends on the availability and maintenance of recreation resources, facilities and public access points to rivers, streams, and lakes. Furthermore, lakeshores and riverfronts have been identified as of unique concern to MSB residents and as sensitive to development in our Resource Inventory and Analysis components of the plan.

Similarly, the Statewide Standard for coastal access is also very broad. The enforceable policies within the MSB CMP, related to this standard, offer more specific direction for providing appropriate public access to, from, and along coastal waters. The state and federal laws that deal with providing public access are agency-specific and are limited to lands within the jurisdiction

of that agency and conditioned depending on the action being proposed by that agency. The MSB CMP compliments state and federal laws by ensuring that local issues are addressed.

We believe that our plan meets the requirements and the intent of the state regulations regarding district coastal plans. We look forward to working with you to complete the approval process for this plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Murph O'Brien", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Murph O'Brien, Planning and Land Use Director
Matanuska-Susitna Borough

cc: Dave Easter, DNR, OPMP

Attachment: 2006 MSB CMP and Pt. MacKenzie AMSA Plan Final Draft Amendments